DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 231 036 EA 015 696

AUTHOR Mazzarella, Jo Ann
TITLE Instructional Leadership: Profile of a High School Principal.
INSTITUTION Oregon School Study Council, Eugene.
PUB DATE Jan 83
NOTE 37p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications, Oregon School Study Council, College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403 ($4.00; quantity discounts).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT OSSC Bulletin; v26 n5 Jan 1983

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Characteristics; Administrator Role; Case Studies; Coordinators; Elementary Secondary Education; Leadership; Leadership Responsibility; *Leadership Styles; Management Teams; Middle Management; *Principals; Supervision
IDENTIFIERS Lake Oswego School District 7J OR

ABSTRACT

Tom Lindersmith, principal of Lakeridge High School in Lake Oswego (Oregon) manages a highly motivated school of 1,100 students and 68 staff by emphasizing facilitation, coordination, and delegation as the elements of instructional leadership. Lindersmith sees himself primarily as a facilitator--supporting and encouraging new ideas and programs (rather than necessarily initiating them), setting guidelines, budgeting for adequate programs, improving the school climate, receiving and giving feedback to teachers, and setting the tone for staff-student rapport. He delegates some of those duties often thought of as belonging to the principal--such as teacher evaluation, curriculum development, staff development, and discipline--to an administrative team that includes an assistant principal and two deans, so that instructional leadership becomes a team effort. Coordinating activities and channeling information are among Lindersmith's strengths, as decision-making and scheduling require communication at three levels--school, district, and community. Although Lindersmith's success at his own style of management may not be successful in every school, this profile does illustrate how instructional leadership might be conducted in a large and complex high school and offers one example of effective administration that adapts a personal style to the needs of an organization. (JW)

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OSSC BULLETIN

ED231036

Instructional Leadership: Profile of a High School Principal

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Jo Ann Mazzarella

January 1983
Vol. 26, No. 5

EA 015 696

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Preface

The Oregon School Study Council has made it a regular practice to describe outstanding school programs in the pages of its monthly Bulletins. Again and again in these descriptions it is clear that the success of the programs owes to the special initiative, vision, and drive of one or two key personnel at the school or district level. Outstanding school programs ultimately can be traced to outstanding educators.

It seems a logical step for us to devote an occasional Bulletin to profiling an individual educator whose outstanding contribution to the field has received praise from his or her colleagues. In this Bulletin, we profile a secondary school principal who has been recognized by the Oregon Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development as one of the state's most effective instructional leaders. The November 1982 issue profiled an elementary school principal who has been similarly recognized.

Research on effective schools and effective school principals during the past decade has focused attention on the crucial importance of the principal's role in the instructional program. We are pleased to contribute to the literature on instructional leadership these analytical profiles of principals in action.

We are indebted to OASCD's Executive Board for assisting us in identifying the two principals who are the subjects of these profiles.

The author, Jo Ann Mazzarella, is a research analyst and writer for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management at the University of

Oregon. Mazzarella is the author of numerous articles and monographs on leadership effectiveness, the principal's role in instructional leadership, and school climate.

Philip K. Piele

Executive Secretary

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Introduction

This month's Bulletin is the second of two on instructional leadership. In spite of the similarity of focus, however, the two are very different: the November Bulletin described how instructional leadership is practiced by a principal, working without formal assistance, in a small (less than 240 students) elementary school; this Bulletin explores instructional leadership as practiced by a principal who relies heavily on his management team in a large (over 1,100 students) high school. Once again we define instructional leadership as "activities that significantly affect the learning that goes on in the school."

We again thank the Oregon Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development for identifying the principal featured in this Bulletin. This principal is Tom Lindersmith, principal of Lakeridge High School in Lake Oswego, who was chosen by the OASCD as exemplifying Oregon's instructional leaders.

Because instructional management is shared by all the administrators at Lakeridge, this Bulletin will not only highlight Lindersmith but also include the other members of the administrative team. Although having more than ten years' experience as an assistant principal, associate principal, and principal, Lindersmith is new to Lakeridge; fall of 1982 marked the beginning of his second year. Before coming to Lakeridge he was principal at Lake Oswego High School, the other high school in the Lake Oswego School District. Consequently, although the Bulletin will focus on Lindersmith's role at Lakeridge, it

will also take a wider perspective by looking at how he practiced leadership at Lake Oswego High School.

It is important to reiterate that Lindersmith is only one of Oregon's many outstanding instructional leaders. Our intent is not to set forth his approach to instructional leadership as the only approach nor even as necessarily the best approach. It is, however, an approach that makes sense and that fits well with Lindersmith's own unique personality and situation. Learning about this approach is valuable not only to new administrators who are wondering "How shall I begin?" but also to experienced administrators who are asking "Is there another way to do it?"

Introducing the School and Its Principal

From the south, a narrow black top road winds its way to Lakeridge High School through fields and forests dotted with modest farmhouses. Here and there is a deserted gas station or an occasional country store or tavern. Approaching Lakeridge this way, one envisions a small 1940s era country school for farmers' children, with perhaps an emphasis on auto mechanics and 4H.

The School

This pastoral vision couldn't be further from the real thing. Built in 1971, Lakeridge High School is a large, imposing, modern building with a tall central "core," devoid of windows, from which protrudes a number of long wings. The whole is painted a stark white.

Inside, the atmosphere resembles that of an urban airport, with students walking, standing, or sitting on the carpeted floor in the central "commons" area. The noise level is high, as is the activity level. A large naturalistic mural of a Model "A" Ford, about twice actual size, completely fills one wall of the commons.

Most of the approximately 1,100 students at Lakeridge are not the sons and daughters of the few rural families who live near the school, but are rather the children of the professional and managerial families who live in the nearby suburban community of Lake Oswego, a city with perhaps the highest per capita income in Oregon.

Academically the students score extremely high. Eighty percent of the students go to college, and most of these go to four-year colleges. Herb Hyde, a teacher at Lakeridge for five years, describes the school

this way:

> We are a very strong school. We have usually from nine to eleven National Merit finalists, and at least three National Merit Scholars. We've had a Presidential Scholar. We have anywhere from twenty-one to twenty-five Oregon Scholars. There is a tremendous number of students who academically achieve very, very high. Some of our students who go to college are amazed at how much better prepared they are than other students. Some of this stems from the fact that the students here are very highly motivated partly because their parents are professional people. Parents here have high demands. They don't accept second. They want first. They want the best.

But it's too easy to stereotype all Lakeridge students as rich and academically talented. If 80 percent go to college, 20 percent do not, and sometimes the school staff, and especially the principal, worry that those 20 percent may get lost in the shuffle. And of course, not all students are rich either. When asked about how people view the school, one student replied, "Rich kids. They think we've all got a lot of money. But that's not always true. I don't really have that much." Even more than in academics, it is perhaps more commonly recognized throughout Oregon that Lakeridge is outstanding in athletics. In Herb Hyde's words again:

> The activites at this school are very, very, very strong. At the present time both of our soccer teams, boys and girls, are playing for first place in the state. Our football team is in the quarter finals in the state. Our girls cross-country team just finished fourth in the state. We've got some kids in gymnastics who are going on to state competition. These kids don't know how to lose.

Since Hyde spoke these words, the boys' and girls' soccer teams both became state champions. The football team was stopped in the quarter finals.

Despite its contemporary, streamlined architecture, the school is surprisingly traditional. "We still teach Shakespeare, and Oedipus,"

says Assistant Principal Bruce Richards. "We've got basic English and biology and social studies, and U.S. history. This is a very traditional community that demands a traditional curriculum to help the kids get into college."

Perhaps because of its modern open-plan look, the school has not always been perceived by the community as traditional, however. Jim Ponti, a member of the school's original staff, recalls:

> When the school first opened it was regarded by many people in the community as a "totally new concept in education" and a "free school" with no bells, where students could come and go as they please, which in fact, was far from the truth. But over the last eleven years the community has totally reversed that view (with the exception of a minority) and now see Lakeridge as a very remarkable school and a very definite asset to the community.

Perhaps one thing that makes this high school, housing grades 9-12, appear to the casual observer to be more "hang loose" than it actually is is the "independent study period." Instead of study halls, students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve have "independent study periods" in which they are free to talk, stroll around the school, or study at tables in subject matter resource areas where teachers are available to answer questions. (Students in grade nine have a required study hall called a "controlled independent study period"). A visitor walking through the noisy central commons where students congregate may get the impression that socializing comes before academics at Lakeridge. But a look at the high grades and test scores at the school shows that the impression is a false one. Students work hard in their classes and accept homework as routine. Independent study periods are successful at Lakeridge because students are self-motivated.

Special Programs

Most schools have some special programs that make them unique, and Lakeridge High School is no exception. Its parent volunteer program, coordinated by Assistant Principal Bruce Richards, is especially strong, with 1,700 volunteer hours in 1981-82. Parent volunteers help with course registration, in the library, in the book room, and with the monthly newsletter. The audiovisual facilities, managed by Herb Hyde, are outstanding, with equipment available for teachers to make video tapes of classroom proceedings or of television programs to show later in their classes.

An alternative program, in its seventh year, serves twenty-four students who are of average or above average intelligence yet have trouble achieving in the regular program. A freshman study skills program is aimed at helping ninth graders develop the study skills necessary to succeed in high school, such as note-taking, test-taking, or listening skills.

One program, begun at Lakeridge in 1981-82, involves a student and faculty exchange with Wolverhampton School in England. Principal Lindersmith initiated the program in 1978 as principal of Lake Oswego High School and then extended it to Lakeridge when he became principal there. In the fall, as many as forty students, together with faculty and administrators, from the English school spend three and a half weeks in Lake Oswego, attending classes, living with families, and seeing something of Oregon, including the Ashland Shakespearean Festival. In the summer, staff and students from both high schools in Lake Oswego return the visit.

Outstanding Staff

That a high school like Lakeridge, with many high achieving students and located in an affluent district, has an excellent staff is not surprising. Principal Tom Lindersmith describes them as a "very, very strong staff--committed, bright, and well-educated. They are moving and they have been moving for years. They don't need to be kicked." He is equally enthusiastic about the other members of the administrative team, Deans Jan Burgess and Bob Schlegel, who handle discipline problems and help with teacher evaluation as well as other duties, and Assistant Principal Bruce Richards, whose responsibilities include curriculum development and teacher inservice education. The total staff numbers sixty-eight members who make up 60 FTE.

Where does all this leave the principal? In a high school where staff and students are highly motivated and where other administrative team members shoulder responsibility for many of the duties usually thought of as instructional leadership, what sorts of things does a principal do to improve achievement in the school? Where a principal must manage a school of 1,100 students and 68 staff members, how is there time for instructional leadership? In the case of Tom Lindersmith, the answers lie in facilitation, coordination, and delegation.

Some New Definitions

Tom Lindersmith is not an instructional leader in the classic sense. Aside from the Wolverhampten Program, he has personally initiated few new programs. He did not hire most of the teachers under

him, nor is he directly involved with teacher inservice education. He admits he doesn't have time to get into the classroom as much as he wants to. Many "instructional support activities," like dealing with attendance or discipline problems, are delegated by Lindersmith to other members of the management team.

Lindersmith is the first to admit he doesn't fit the usual definitions of instructional leadership. This makes him challenge the definitions.

> I agree with some of the literature on instructional leadership, and I don't agree with some of it. There is a dichotomy that is sometimes struck: either you're an instructional leader or you're a manager, but you can't be both. I think I'm both.
>
> I see myself as a very strong instructional leader. That is to say, because of some of my values and behaviors, things happen in the classroom in terms of instruction and curriculum development and curriculum change. Yet I have very little to do with these things directly.
>
> There are three things I do, I think. First, I delegate a lot of things. For instance, Bruce Richards is a fantastic curriculum man, and I leave curriculum development to him. When I delegate, I see my primary role as getting out of people's way. The only requirement I make is that my staff keep in touch. Second, I give my staff as much support as I possibly can, so I see myself as a facilitator. Finally, I see myself as a coordinator of the many projects, and goals, and targets that the staff have.

Facilitation, delegation, coordination. That is how Tom Lindersmith sees instructional leadership. What sort of background does such a principal have? Not surprisingly, it is not a traditional one. Lindersmith holds a Ph D in counseling psychology; he chose this route to the principalship rather than the usual administrative courses because he is most interested in the "people" aspects of administration.

> We know how to build buildings, we have super equipment designed for us, and we've got a pretty good organizational structure in public education, but it's when we throw the people in that we start to screw it up. So I thought it was

> reasonable to become trained not in boilers or in school design but in how to manage the people that are in the buildings--both kids and adults.

His reasons for becoming a principal are also people related.

> It's that "x" factor, the multiplier factor. As a classroom teacher you can affect maybe a hundred forty-five kids a semester, as a counselor you affect maybe three or four hundred, as an administrator you can affect literally thousands.

Lindersmith doesn't look like Dr. Lindersmith. Thin, wearing a sport shirt and no tie, he looks younger than his forty-seven years. Members of his staff often describe him as "informal," and a teacher once introduced him as "our principal who walks down the hall with a coffee cup in his hand."

His personal style fits with his leadership style. He looks like a principal who would be more interested in facilitating than pushing his own ideas, more interested in delegating than running the whole show, and more interested in coordinating than handing down orders.

Facilitation

Facilitation means literally "to make easier." It also means "to lighten the work of, assist, or help." Helping, making things easier for, and lightening the work load of teachers is integral to Tom Lindersmith's vision of instructional leadership. Says Assistant Principal Bruce Richards: "When you come to Tom for something, he rarely says 'no.' He says 'How can we do it?'"

Lindersmith is not a principal who becomes enamored of a new program and then tries to drum up enthusiasm in his school for implementing it. Instead, he tries to be receptive to enthusiasm that is already there. Rachel Lee, a teacher at Lake Oswego High School, the school where Lindersmith was principal from 1977-1981, describes him:

> Because of his leadership style, he does not initiate or promote specific changes. He has a very open leadership style that encourages individual initiative, so that changes in the program generally come through the staff rather than from the top down or being imposed by him.

Jim Jamieson, a teacher at Lakeridge high school, where Tom is in the middle of his second year, put it this way:

> A number of programs that have addressed problems building-wide in the last year and a half have come from faculty. These suggestions have had Tom's wholehearted support. One thing about his style of leadership is that he doesn't want to take people where they don't want to go. He wants to find out where people want to go and then helps them get there.

According to Jamieson, one program suggested by staff and given a boost by Lindersmith is the freshman study skills program described in the last chapter. Initiated by faculty, this program received strong support from Lindersmith, who then delegated responsibility for implementing it to Assistant Principal Bruce Richards. Lindersmith

describes how the program began:

> This is something we've really needed for a long time, so when a group of people got fired up about it, I made sure they were given curriculum time in the summer to work on it and encouraged them to bring it back and implement it.

Herb Hyde, Lakeridge teacher, sees Lindersmith as someone who refuses to give orders. He regards this refusal as positive but not always easy to live with:

> Tom leads more in a guidance sense than in a rigid sense. He's not the kind of person who stands over you and says, "Do this. Do that." Rather it's more like, "What do you think are the directions that we should go?" Then arriving at some goals between the two of you and saying, "That's the direction we should go." He's not a terribly rigid man. This makes him nice to work for, but at times it can be painful, because as a teacher you're looking for a specific answer. A lot of times the easy way to get that answer is to go and have somebody tell you what it is, but when you go to Tom, he's not going to tell you.

Firm Decisions

The role of facilitator, carried to extreme, can make a leader afraid to make decisions, afraid to act, and afraid to take responsibility for actions and decisions. Tom Lindersmith is not a victim of such fears. "He is a strong leader in the sense of making final decisions," says Jo Wollen, head of the English Department at Lakeridge, who cites an example. This fall when Wollen wanted to purchase for the English Department a film that she felt some parents might object to, she went to Lindersmith. He questioned her and other teachers thoroughly about the educational value of the film and how it fit into the English program, particulary its usefulness in the study of the work of Joseph Conrad. Once Lindersmith was convinced that the film would be a worthwhile addition to the department, he, not she,

shouldered the responsibilty for making the decision to buy it. He explains:

> It was a very risky decision. This is her first year as a department chair and I didn't want her to have to carry the psychological responsibility. I as the principal will be held responsible anyway, so it doesn't cost me any more to say I'm taking the responsibility.

Even though Lindersmith delegates a lot of responsibility to his administrative team, when it comes to making important decisions, he emphasizes that he doesn't use a "team management" approach.

> I'm not a "team manager," I'm a "participatory manager." I'll always, hopefully, seek advice and council from those whose judgment I trust, but when the decision is my bailiwick, my responsibility, there comes a time when I say, "OK, there's the way we're going to do it."

He also goes beyond mere facilitation when he evaluates teachers. Although he delegates a good portion of his teacher evaluation duties, he personally evaluates about thirty teachers. The process involves mutual goal setting between teacher and evaluator, but Lindersmith sets forth his own expectations clearly. Herb Hyde says:

> Methods of teacher evaluation are standard for the state, but it's how the principal deals with evaluation that makes a difference. Tom is much more specific in goal-setting than other principals. He says, "These are the kinds of goals I'm looking for." Some principals are more dictatorial than Tom, but others are more vague, don't give you any help with goal-setting or any feedback at all. At one school where I worked, one teacher was very good at writing educational jargon, so all the teachers had her write their goals for them. Then everybody just forgot about them as soon as they were turned in. I get feedback from Tom. He lets me know how he feels about what I'm doing--both positively and negatively.

Financial Support

Money usually makes things easier, and for Lindersmith, facilitation includes providing needed resources. When asked about ways

that Lindersmith might affect the instructional program, teacher Herb Hyde replied:

> Budgetary activities seem mundane, but this is something he's very good at. He's very concerned that items needed by teachers for the instructional program are available. I'm talking about computers, software for computers, instructional media, videotapes, film projectors, all those kinds of things. He's very concerned that there is enough in the budget to meet the needs of the teachers. A lot of times teachers don't realize how much he's done behind the scenes, but in terms of curriculum, it opens up a lot of doors. It has a very large impact on students and on teacher time and availability. In my own particular area he's very concerned about the materials that I cover. I have more time now in terms of more class periods for Theater than I had before.

Lindersmith is the first to agreee with Hyde's analysis of the budget's importance.

> I spend a lot of time on the budget--an awful lot of time on budget creation and budget administration--because I believe strongly that I've got people who can do things if they've got the money to do them. If I can provide the money for them, things will happen.

One example of how a principal's control of the purse strings can be used for facilitation is the money Lindersmith has allocated this year to send staff people to workshops on computer use not covered by the district. In one particular case, Lindersmith's facilitation activities have a payoff in making things easier for him. An aide in the textbook room, after attending five days of computer workshops, has become so proficient that over one weekend she created a program to make it possible for Lindersmith to create his yearly budget on the computer, thereby saving hours of work with paper, pencil, and calculator. Lindersmith says, "Here again, it's facilitation. I didn't tell her how to do it or what she should be doing. I just made it possible."

The importance of the principal's financial support is clear to

Mike Goodrich, science teacher at Lindersmith's previous assignment, Lake Oswego High School.

> Here we are committed to a lab-oriented science program, which costs a lot of morey because of the need for materials and supplies. Tom relied on the department chair to tell him the department's needs, then was very supportive of the budget he asked for. When he was principal here, inflation was very bad; for example, silver nitrate went up 300 percent. Tom understood why our needs were expensive, and he set a precedent for the budget to grow each year. Partly as a consequence of this kind of support we have an outstanding science program that we are very proud of.

Other teachers at Lake Oswego High School are aware of the importance of budget support. Librarian Jane McElroy, when asked about ways Lindersmith affected that high school, answered:

> He was very supportive of the library budget. There are certain basic needs that any school library has and one of those needs is periodicals. We always seemed to be a little short in the area of periodicals. He gave me additional amounts to make sure that area was no longer slighted. He understood that, even though we had 200 students fewer than Lakeridge, that didn't mean that we didn't need to have the same number of periodicals supporting their research.

School Climate

High achievement and a positive school climate go together. If students feel that administrators and teachers really care about them, and at the same time that school is an orderly place where misbehavior will not be tolerated, then many of the discipline problems that hamper learning activities will be avoided.

One of the first things Lindersmith did when he arrived at Lakeridge High School last year was to try to develop a positive relationship with students. He believes that when the principal has a sound relationship with students, teachers benefit.

> My strategy was this: if I can get a thousand kids and mold

> and sway their attitudes, their feelings about the school, and their feelings about me as an adult authority figure representative of all the other adult authority figures in the school, if I can set a tone with them, it's going to make things a lot easier for every teacher in every class they teach. I've done that in the four high schools I've been in and it's worked every time.

Even after less than a year and a half, it seems to have worked at Lakeridge too. Student comments about Lindersmith are positive: "He's cool." "He wishes everybody good luck before athletic events." "He's a good principal. He tries to know everyone's name." Faculty too concur that he has a good relationship with kids.

One important way that Lindersmith develops his relationship with students is through visibility. Superintendent Don Charles sees visibility as one of Lindersmith's greatest strengths. Lindersmith attends athletic and other events. He walks through the school and speaks to students in the commons. One Lakeridge parent said, "He's always out and about, and he's very much liked by students."

But being a visible principal who is well liked by students isn't enough. Principals need to show students they have high expectations for their behavior, or the "nice guy" principal becomes more of a peer than a leader. Last year, working together with the deans and assistant principal, Lindersmith headed a campaign to cut noise and eliminate trash in the central commons area. Radios without earphones were banned, and students were urged to pick up after themselves. Everyone agrees that the campaign was a success. Lindersmith's biggest contribution? According to teacher Herb Hyde, it was "getting students to realize that these things are their own responsibility."

That Lindersmith's approach to students worked during his four

years at Lake Oswego High School is even more apparent. Teacher Mike Goodrich sees Lindersmith's relationship to students there as one of his greatest strengths. Librarian Jane McElroy agrees: "He had a very positive effect on climate here. Everyone felt he cared." And counselor Dave Spire says: "He came into a negative situation and effected a change in climate. The students really cared for him." Lindersmith himself, summarizing his four-year stint at Lake Oswego High School, said, "My main job there was morale-raising."

Climate Problems

Student morale is only one factor in school climate. Teacher morale is equally important. Everyone at Lakeridge High School seems to agree that last year, Lindersmith's first year at the school, teacher morale was not always good. Lindersmith's strategy of spending a lot of time developing his relationship with students meant less time with teachers. He thought it would be apparent to staff why they were being slighted. It wasn't.

> The faculty here got very upset last year because I didn't pay enough attention to them. I spent a reasonable amount of time with them, but I went after the kids, really. And I made a mistake, an incredible mistake, in that I didn't explain this to the staff. I just assumed they would understand it.

All principals make mistakes. Perhaps what separates the good ones from the not-so-good ones is their mechanisms for preventing mistakes from becoming full-scale crises. Lindersmith became aware of this mistake through a sheet he circulates every year asking teachers for feedback on his performance. Because of his belief in the importance of getting feedback, he was able to see the problem before it got out of hand. He apologized to the teachers and explained his reasons for

acting as he did. Although it's too soon to be sure, there's some evidence that things have already improved. "The staff have more positive feelings than last year," says teacher Jo Wollen.

Perhaps the staff at Lake Oswego High School had time to learn to understand Lindersmith better. At any rate, at that school, such problems don't seem apparent. Teachers at Lake Oswego seemed to have been comfortable with the idea of a leader who may not have always initiated contact but who was always receptive. When Lake Oswego teachers are asked to describe Lindersmith, terms like "good listener," "approachable," "receptive," and "open to new ideas" appear again and again. But such an appproach won't work in every school. As Lake Oswego teacher Rachel Lee warns, "A staff that wasn't self-directed would have trouble under him."

Curriculum Development

In the Lake Oswego School District, as throughout Oregon, the courses taught and the skills to be taught in them are determined by the district. But innovation is possible in terms of teaching style and specific course content. This sort of curriculum development is another area where Lindersmith is more a facilitator than a principal actor. His contribution to this area at his previous high school was described by Lake Oswego teacher Mike Goodrich:

> Tom let teachers know he was amenable to needed change. He encouraged them to submit their ideas about curriculum needs to the administrators and the faculty council. He emphasized his receptiveness to curriculum revision.

At Lakeridge High School, Lindersmith delegates many curriculum development activities. His own role is an informal one. It usually

involves talking to teachers on a one-to-one level.

> Teachers are very conservative creatures for the most part. It's very comfortable to say you've been doing something for ten years, so why change it?
>
> I think of myself as the person who asks the tough questions. I try to keep the faculty thinking. Why are we teaching Great Expectations? Is there another way to get across the same ideas? Are there skills that an art teacher can teach better on a kick wheel than on a motorized wheel? This sort of question gets the teacher to look at the skills he or she wants to develop and think about how to do it.
>
> This sort of approach "keeps the pot boiling." I believe it is more effective than formal large-scale curriculum evaluation. It keeps teachers questioning.

It can be seen from this chapter that facilitation is not just an empty catch-phrase for Tom Lindersmith. For him, its meanings are specific and far-reaching. For Lindersmith, facilitation means being receptive to and encouraging and supporting new ideas and programs, making firm decisions when they need to be made, and setting clear guidelines when they need to be set. It means providing resources where they are most needed to improve the academic program. It means improving school climate. It means having a formal mechanism for teachers to let him know how they feel about his performance. And, finally, facilitation means "keeping the pot boiling" so that teachers are always asking themselves why they do what they do and how they could do it better. Although these activities may not be part of everyone's definition of instructional leadership, it is not hard to see that they can have significant effects on the learning that goes on in the school.

Delegation

Clearly the central feature of Tom Lindersmith's instructional leadership is facilitation. But delegation is important too.

When asked about Lindersmith's strengths as a principal, Superintendent Don Charles replied:

> I think he is able to delegate responsibility. He establishes clear lines of authority, assigns that authority, then allows his administrators and teachers to carry out the assigned tasks.

Further down the administrative line, Assistant Principal Bruce Richards agrees. "One of Tom's greatest strengths is that he delegates responsibility and then lets you do what he's asked you to do. He doesn't jump in and do it before you can get it done. He trusts us."

And from teachers, the report is the same. "He delegates authority very well," says Lakeridge teacher Jim Ponti. Lake Oswego High School Librarian Jane McElroy explains, "His leadership style is one of delegation. He provided budget and administrative support, then allowed me to run the library in my own way."

At Lake Oswego High School, another example of Lindersmith's openness to delegating his decision-making authority was his use of the faculty council. According to Lake Oswego counselor Dave Spire, "He turned a previously noneffective committee into an effective committee. The faculty council was just a rubber stamp council. Now it has a real say in how the school is run."

The Team

At Lakeridge High School, delegation largely means sharing authority

with the administrative team--Assistant Principal Bruce Richards and Deans Bob Schlegel and Jan Burgess. The administrative team has long been a fixture at Lakeridge. Although its members changed, its structure did not change significantly when Lindersmith arrived. Nevertheless, to understand Lindersmith's own unique brand of instructional leadership, it is necessary to understand the team's role. In fact, many of the important facets of instructional leadership are delegated by Lindersmith. Without the other team members, instructional leadership would not be possible in a school of 1,100 students like Lakeridge High School.

Richards shares responsibility for teacher evaluation and is in charge of a number of other operations, including curriculum development, teacher professional growth, the master schedule, textbook selection, public relations, and supervison of student course selection and registration for grades 9-11. Burgess helps with teacher evaluation and is responsible for discipline for about half the students, and for supervising and coordinating activities, textbook buying, setting up the school calendar, and other duties. Schlegel is in charge of guidance, does a share of teacher evaluation, does half the discipline, and is responsible for data processing management, testing, last minute schedule changing, special education, student course selection for students coming from eighth grade, and other duties.

All these duties contribute to student achievement either directly or indirectly by allowing more time and energy for learning. The activities most directly linked to instructional leadership, however, are teacher evaluation and supervision, curriculum development and

teacher professional growth, and discipline.

Teacher Evaluation and Supervision

Lindersmith delegates responsibility for evaluating a little more than half the teachers at Lakeridge. No matter who evaluates a teacher, the evaluator gets together with the teacher for goal setting, then observes the teacher either formally or informally, and gives the teacher feedback.

Lindersmith's facilitative style of teacher evaluation has already been described. Most of the teacher evaluation not done by Lindersmith falls on Richards. As has already been mentioned, part of Lindersmith's style of delegating is to allow subordinates to do things their own way. Richards appreciates Lindersmith's willingness to let him approach teacher evaluation in a way that rests on Richards' own particular experiences and ways of looking at things.

Richards' style of evaluation is based on his belief that if teachers are given reinforcement they will work harder, and "this affects kids very directly." Richards visits each of the approximately thirty teachers he evaluates three to five times a year for twenty-five-to-forty-minute observations. He also drops in from time to time for ten to fifteen minutes. These visits not only help Richards evaluate teachers but also help him become aware of curriculum and teacher idiosyncracies. This way, when parents call with questions or concerns, he isn't in the dark about what's going on in the classroom.

Richards makes it a point to follow up each visit with a written note or a conference session. At the beginning of the year, before specific goals have been set, he focuses on the teacher's tone and

rapport with the students and the general feeling in the classroom. Questioning strategies are also a special interest of his. Richards feels it is important to give positive reinforcement for all the things that teachers are doing right.

After making teacher observations, all four members of the administrative team get together to talk about what they've seen, to help gain perspective and clarify their goals.

Curriculum Development and Professional Growth

At Lakeridge, curriculum development and professional growth are intertwined. Ideas for improving instruction come out of staff development activities like visits to conferences or inservice presentations. Larger-scale curriculum development activities are somewhat limited by the district's desire to have uniform curriculum at both schools and by the community's insistence on a solid college preparatory curriculum. Nevertheless, some curriculum development ideas (like the freshman study skills program) come from teachers who can obtain district financial support for summer curriculum development work.

One of Richards' contributions to curriculum development and staff development is a curriculum newsletter, which comes out every few weeks from his office. The goal as he sees it is to "keep the staff fresh." He does this in two ways. One is by offering recognition and "pats on the back" to staff for accomplishments both inside and outside of school, thereby helping them to feel appreciated. Another is to share new curriculum ideas or results from recent research relating to the improvement of instruction. Ideas for the newsletter come from teacher

contributions and from Richards' extensive reading in educational journals.

Much of the formal inservice teacher education at Lakeridge is arranged by the district. Occasionally, individual teachers are responsible for particular presentations that are well received, but building-level inservice programs aimed at the whole faculty are not a priority. This may be because, as teacher Jo Wollen says, "this is a large staff with very diverse expertise. It's hard to please them all."

Instead, the administrative team approaches staff development on more of a small group or one-to-one basis. Richards explains:

> I used to think large across-the-staff inservice programs were a good idea. Now I know that won't work in a staff of this size. Now I'm much more interested in a one-to-one or ad hoc voluntary small group approach. It's the yeast approach.

For every teacher Richards supervises, he keeps an index card on which he records that teacher's special interest.

> Then when I see an article, a book, or a conference that might interest that person, I tell him or her about it. For instance, the ASCD just had a conference on brain research. A couple of teachers here are very interested in that area, so I went to them and said, "Hey, let's go to the conference."

Central to Richards' approach to both staff development and curriculum is encouraging and enabling teachers to go to conferences. Last year, for instance, a number of teachers went to the International Reading Association Conference. Other teachers went to the Seaside conference on health education and brought back to the whole school a new emphasis on wellness. Richards adds:

> I've got three teachers considering applying for National Endowment for the Humanities workshops. That's the kind of thing I want to encourage. It helps teachers to be more alive and vibrant and full of new ideas. And I'm hoping that they in turn will have the same effect on the curriculum.

Discipline

Although disciplining students may not at first appear to be related to instructional leadership, many experts on the topic classify discipline as an "instructional support" activity--the support that frees teachers to spend more time on instruction. At Lakeridge much of the discipline is handled by Deans Schlegel and Burgess. They help patrol the halls, cafeteria, and parking lot and supervise other teachers on patrol. Schlegel handles discipline referals for students whose last names begin with "A" to "K" and Burgess handles "L" to "Z". Principal Lindersmith acts as the court of appeals when necessary, which is about twice a week.

According to Lindersmith, discipline is not a big problem at Lakeridge. In Burgess' words, "Our problems are about average for an urban high school in Oregon. Problems run the whole gamut, from rowdiness to alcohol and drugs." Alcohol and drug offenses are not winked at. District policy demands that any student involved with either at any school function or event will receive a seven-day suspension and an expulsion hearing. A second offense usually results in an expulsion.

Attendance problems are dealt with by the deans along with an attendance supervisor and an aide who calls home, keeps records, and posts absences. A new program, begun by last year's attendance supervisor, requires teachers to call home to check on the first infraction. The program has met with uneven success, depending on the level of commitment of each teacher.

It should be clear from the preceding paragraphs that delegation is central to Tom Lindersmith's interpretation of instructional leadership. And it should also be clear that many of the duties usually thought of as important facets of instructional leadership--teacher evaluation, curriculum development, staff development, and even discipline--are shouldered largely by the administrative team. The fact that he has so much help does not mean that Lindersmith is any less an instructional leader than a principal who attempts to perform all these activities without help. Instead, it means that instructional leadership as a team effort is more effective at Lakeridge than at a high school of comparable size in which the principal must act alone.

Coordination

It might seem that a principal like Tom Lindersmith who delegates so many duties, who facilitates rather than innovates, might be able to take things easy. Perhaps he sits back with his feet on his desk, secure in the knowledge that the school is humming along without him. One has only to spend a day with Lindersmith or to look at his appointment calendar to see that this isn't so. He never seems to stop moving. Much of this activity could be classified as coordination. He is a central figure in the coordination of school activities, and he must be involved in the coordination of these activities with the district as a whole and with the community.

School-Level Coordination

Lindersmith's office, with its "open door," is the center of a hubbub that seems unceasing. People come to him for information or to give him information. Such information sharing is important to coordination of school activities. Lindersmith elaborates:

> A lot of what I do is just deal with people who come into my office. The head custodian comes in to talk about his budget and how to break it down. Or the dean of activities comes in with a problem with the mother of a third grader who wants her daughter to be our flag team mascot, so I have to check things out with the dean and the band director to make sure we would all use the same logic to tell her, "I'm sorry we can't do that."

Coordination among members of the administrative team is especially important. To make teamwork possible, a lot of interaction among team members is necessary. All four members meet regularly once a week for a meeting that may last two or three hours. According to Burgess, these

meetings often include going over the next week's activities to see who will be covering the building. Team members also discuss staffing, discipline, or any particular concerns they may have. According to Richards, these meetings are important too so that members can give each other support. "That way none of us feels alone."

Lindersmith also insists that the other members of his administrative team, as well as getting together for weekly meetings, come to him right away when anything important comes up. Bob Schlegel explains, "One of the things he told us early on was that he wanted to hear about things before they get to eight or nine on a crisis level. He wants to hear at level three."

District-Level Coordination

Information sharing is necessary also to promote coordination with the central office. Superintendent Don Charles sees such information sharing as one of Lindersmith's strengths.

> He relates very well to people in the central office. He is very open with me. He tips me off when there's a potential problem. If he senses any kind of problem or signal that he ought to be communicating with us, he's quick to get here.

Lindersmith's time is filled with other coordination at the district level. He is responsible for the district coordination of art education. He has served on a number of district committees, including one studying the time students spend in activities and athletics. Chet Gillihan, district director of administrative services, remembers that Lindersmith "participated heavily in providing material on teachers' and counselors' expectations about use of time for activities programs. And he worked on the original draft and editing." He also chaired for two

years an administrator committee that makes recommendations to the superintendent concerning administrator benefits. On this committee, Gillihan saw Lindersmith as "well-organized, well-prepared," and having "a lot of support from other administrators."

As any administrator knows, coordination means meetings, and Lindersmith's week is filled with them:

> On Tuesday, I've got a secondary principal's meeting at 9:00, a building advisory committee meeting at 11:30, another meeting at 1:00, a department chairmen meeting at 3:15. That's the whole day shot. Wednesday I have to be in Salem at 8:30, be back here for a League of Principals' meeting at 11:00. That will last until 2:00 or 2:30. Thursday, at 10:00 I have superintendent's advisory committee. That takes up most of the morning, and Friday at 8:30 is a parent volunteer workshop.

The pace is hectic, and there is a danger of becoming fragmented. It's no wonder that Lindersmith anticipates that by age 55 or so he won't be able to sustain the energy level necessary to continue in the job.

School Community Coordination

Another type of coordination is that between the school and community. This area, usually thought of as public relations, has two facets at Lakeridge. Public relations is officially the responsibility of Bruce Richards, who handles press releases and supervises the parent volunteer program. Richards explains his approach:

> I like to think of P.R. as standing for "performance rewarded." I go out of my way to thank volunteers when they're in the building. This makes parents feel more positive about the school. This last spring at the district tea recognizing volunteer tutors, the Lakeridge parent tutors told the administrators who were there, "You don't have to thank us again for what we're doing. We already <u>know</u> we're wanted."

Another aspect of public relations is handled by Principal

Lindersmith. Lake Oswego English teacher Rachel Lee sees one of Lindersmith's greatest talents as "his ability to work with people to bring in community support." When he talks to community organizations or to the school board, he "projects a warm caring attitude and is articulate and well-spoken." And the fact that Lindersmith attends a large number of athletic and other extracurricular events is seen by everyone as contributing greatly to positive public relations. Lakeridge teacher Jim Ponti explains, "His visibility at academic and athletic events is very important to parents. It makes them feel better about the leadership of the school."

Scheduling

A final and important aspect of coordination is scheduling. When things are carefully scheduled and well organized, confusion and time wasting are minimized and, in turn, learning time is maximized. Here again the administrative team steps in. All aspects of scheduling, from the master schedule to the weekly calendar, are handled by the assistant principal and deans, thereby freeing the principal for the kinds of coordination activities he does best.

This chapter has attempted to show that coordination is an extremely important and time-consuming activity in schools. This coordination takes the form of one-to-one information sharing, district meetings and committees, formal and informal public relations, and scheduling. Because such coordination is necessary to make things run smoothly in the school and to make instructional improvements work, it can be classified as an important component of instructional leadership.

Conclusion

Facilitation, delegation, and coordination--perhaps not the usual definition of instructional leadership, certainly not the old fashioned picture of the principal as master teacher. But Lakeridge High School is not an old fashioned school; it is a large, terribly complex institution full of teachers and students who have their own definitions of education and their own unique visions of where they are going.

Instructional leadership as it is practiced by Tom Lindersmith at Lakeridge would not be effective at every school or with every faculty. In fact, there is no objective way to tell whether it is working at Lakeridge, except that achievement continues to be high. But this article does not purport to be an objective study of instructional leadership. Instead it is a subjective look at one instructional leader and his own particular way of operating.

What is valuable in this profile is that it reveals one way in which the myriad of activities that are usually thought of as instructional leadership can be performed. It shows how teachers can be given budget support for instructional improvement, how school climate problems can be addressed, how faculty can be challenged to think about why they do what they do, and how innovation can be encouraged and supported. This profile also shows how certain instructional leadership responsibilities--including teacher evaluation, curriculum development, and discipline--can be shared by the members of an administrative team when those members are competent and motivated. Finally, it shows the enormous effort it takes to coordinate it all and how that effort can be

managed.

The profile does not claim to illustrate the only way instructional leadership can be accomplished or even the best way, but it does show one way. One major implication of the profile is important in a day when the principal's role is becoming more and more difficult and complex: effective instructional leadership is still possible.

Interviews

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Jamieson, Jim, director of alternative program. Interview, November 15, 1982.

Lindersmith, Tom, principal. Interview, November 15, 1982. Telephone interview, November 29, 1982.

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Ponti, Jim, art teacher. Interview, November 15, 1982.

Schlegel, Bob, dean. Telephone interview, November 29, 1982.

Wollen, Jo, English teacher and English Department Head. Interview, November 15, 1982.

Staff, Lake Oswego High School, Lake Oswego School District 7J, Lake Oswego, Oregon:

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Lee, Rachel, English teacher and English Department Chair. Telephone interview, December 2, 1982.

McElroy, Jane, librarian. Telephone interview, November 30, 1982.

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Central Office Staff, Lake Oswego School District 7J, Lake Oswego, Oregon:

Charles, Don, superintendent. Telephone interview, December 3, 1982.

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